

July 5, 1974

Dr. J. J. McCaughan, Jr., M.D.  
Veterans Administration Hospital  
1030 Jefferson Avenue  
Memphis, Tennessee 38104

Dear Dr. McCaughan:

It was very kind of you to reply to my earlier letter and both my wife and I have read with complete fascination Dr. William Shockley's article. He has articulated concerns I have felt for a long time.

If he is planning to do some genetic studies in white populations I hope you will urge him to come to eastern Kentucky. This region is a laboratory for the study of genetic decline. For example, my friend Columbus Sexton is our local Director of Title I school programs. For many years he has given or supervised the giving of IQ tests in the Letcher County, Kentucky school system. He has talked to me about the slow, steady erosion of achievement as reflected by the tests. The Sexton Branch school showed results that declined at an average rate of 0.5 per cent per year. Since that time the school has been consolidated and the children are merged with students from a large territory to compose a new consolidated school. However, the last year in which the tests were given the highest score achieved by any Sexton Branch student was 89.

Some of this failure was doubtless due to cultural deprivation. The children grow up in little, poorly kept, overcrowded shanties and the parents give little encouragement to going to school. The truancy and drop-out

rates are high. But something more is at work. I think the relentless out-migration of the stronger elements has produced a sort of human refuse. The culled remnants of the population then intermarry with devastating genetic results.

We have the astonishing situation in which one-third to one-half of the people are dependent on welfare checks and food stamps while their second and third cousins in the cities are bank officials and important government officials. I can give you dozens of names of people in the latter category. According to an old mountain saying, "The people with get up and go got up and went."

If Dr. Shockley decides to take a look at this area I will be pleased to assist him in every possible way. There are young physicians at the University of Kentucky Medical Center who would find his work very deserving of their support.

Very truly yours,

Harry M. Caudill  
Attorney at Law  
Whitesburg, Kentucky